

Environmental Protection Agency

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the Act if the State does not conduct a reevaluation consistent with the frequency specified in the WQS variance or the results are not submitted to EPA as required by (b)(1)(v) of this section.

(2) The supporting documentation must include:

(i) Documentation demonstrating the need for a WQS variance.

(A) For a WQS variance to a use specified in section 101(a)(2) of the Act or a sub-category of such a use, the State must demonstrate that attaining the designated use and criterion is not feasible throughout the term of the WQS variance because:

(1) One of the factors listed in § 131.10(g) is met, or

(2) Actions necessary to facilitate lake, wetland, or stream restoration through dam removal or other significant reconfiguration activities preclude attainment of the designated use and criterion while the actions are being implemented.

(B) For a WQS variance to a non-101(a)(2) use, the State must submit documentation justifying how its consideration of the use and value of the water for those uses listed in § 131.10(a) appropriately supports the WQS variance and term. A demonstration consistent with paragraph (b)(2)(i)(A) of this section may be used to satisfy this requirement.

(ii) Documentation demonstrating that the term of the WQS variance is only as long as necessary to achieve the highest attainable condition. Such documentation must justify the term of the WQS variance by describing the pollutant control activities to achieve the highest attainable condition, including those activities identified through a Pollutant Minimization Program, which serve as milestones for the WQS variance.

(iii) In addition to paragraphs (b)(2)(i) and (ii) of this section, for a WQS variance that applies to a water body or waterbody segment:

(A) Identification and documentation of any cost-effective and reasonable best management practices for nonpoint source controls related to the pollutant(s) or water quality parameter(s) and water body or waterbody segment(s) specified in the WQS vari-

ance that could be implemented to make progress towards attaining the underlying designated use and criterion. A State must provide public notice and comment for any such documentation.

(B) Any subsequent WQS variance for a water body or waterbody segment must include documentation of whether and to what extent best management practices for nonpoint source controls were implemented to address the pollutant(s) or water quality parameter(s) subject to the WQS variance and the water quality progress achieved.

(c) *Implementing WQS variances in NPDES permits.* A WQS variance serves as the applicable water quality standard for implementing NPDES permitting requirements pursuant to § 122.44(d) of this chapter for the term of the WQS variance. Any limitations and requirements necessary to implement the WQS variance shall be included as enforceable conditions of the NPDES permit for the permittee(s) subject to the WQS variance.

[80 FR 51048, Aug. 21, 2015]

§ 131.15 Authorizing the use of schedules of compliance for water quality-based effluent limits in NPDES permits.

If a State intends to authorize the use of schedules of compliance for water quality-based effluent limits in NPDES permits, the State must adopt a permit compliance schedule authorizing provision. Such authorizing provision is a water quality standard subject to EPA review and approval under section 303 of the Act and must be consistent with sections 502(17) and 301(b)(1)(C) of the Act.

[80 FR 51049, Aug. 21, 2015]

Subpart C—Procedures for Review and Revision of Water Quality Standards

§ 131.20 State review and revision of water quality standards.

(a) *State review.* The State shall from time to time, but at least once every 3 years, hold public hearings for the purpose of reviewing applicable water quality standards adopted pursuant to

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§§131.10 through 131.15 and Federally promulgated water quality standards and, as appropriate, modifying and adopting standards. The State shall also re-examine any waterbody segment with water quality standards that do not include the uses specified in section 101(a)(2) of the Act every 3 years to determine if any new information has become available. If such new information indicates that the uses specified in section 101(a)(2) of the Act are attainable, the State shall revise its standards accordingly. Procedures States establish for identifying and reviewing water bodies for review should be incorporated into their Continuing Planning Process. In addition, if a State does not adopt new or revised criteria for parameters for which EPA has published new or updated CWA section 304(a) criteria recommendations, then the State shall provide an explanation when it submits the results of its triennial review to the Regional Administrator consistent with CWA section 303(c)(1) and the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) *Public participation.* The State shall hold one or more public hearings for the purpose of reviewing water quality standards as well as when revising water quality standards, in accordance with provisions of State law and EPA's public participation regulation (40 CFR part 25). The proposed water quality standards revision and supporting analyses shall be made available to the public prior to the hearing.

(c) *Submittal to EPA.* The State shall submit the results of the review, any supporting analysis for the use attainability analysis, the methodologies used for site-specific criteria develop-

ment, any general policies applicable to water quality standards and any revisions of the standards to the Regional Administrator for review and approval, within 30 days of the final State action to adopt and certify the revised standard, or if no revisions are made as a result of the review, within 30 days of the completion of the review.

[48 FR 51405, Nov. 8, 1983, as amended at 80 FR 51049, Aug. 21, 2015]

§ 131.21 EPA review and approval of water quality standards.

(a) After the State submits its officially adopted revisions, the Regional Administrator shall either:

(1) Notify the State within 60 days that the revisions are approved, or

(2) Notify the State within 90 days that the revisions are disapproved. Such notification of disapproval shall specify the changes needed to assure compliance with the requirements of the Act and this regulation, and shall explain why the State standard is not in compliance with such requirements. Any new or revised State standard must be accompanied by some type of supporting analysis.

(b) The Regional Administrator's approval or disapproval of a State water quality standard shall be based on the requirements of the Act as described in §§131.5 and 131.6, and, with respect to Great Lakes States or Tribes (as defined in 40 CFR 132.2), 40 CFR part 132.

(c) *How do I determine which water quality standards are applicable for purposes of the Act?* You may determine which water quality standards are applicable water quality standards for purposes of the Act from the following table:

If—	Then—	Unless or until—	In which case—
(1) A State or authorized Tribe has adopted a water quality standard that is effective under State or Tribal law and has been submitted to EPA before May 30, 2000 the State or Tribe's water quality standard is the applicable water quality standard for purposes of the Act EPA has promulgated a more stringent water quality standard for the State or Tribe that is in effect the EPA-promulgated water quality standard is the applicable water quality standard for purposes of the Act until EPA withdraws the Federal water quality standard.
(2) A State or authorized Tribe adopts a water quality standard that goes into effect under State or Tribal law on or after May 30, 2000 once EPA approves that water quality standard, it becomes the applicable water quality standard for purposes of the Act EPA has promulgated a more stringent water quality standard for the State or Tribe that is in effect the EPA promulgated water quality standard is the applicable water quality standard for purposes of the Act until EPA withdraws the Federal water quality standard.